

REMARKS

Claims 1-45 are pending in the present application. Claim 43 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 44, which has been cancelled herein without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein.

Reexamination of the application and reconsideration of the rejections and objections are respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks, which follow the order set forth in the Office Action.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claim 43 has been rejected for alleged anticipation by U.S. Patent No. 5,662,086 to Piccinini (“Piccinini”).

Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection is moot in view of the amendment of claim 43 to incorporate the limitations of claim 44, which was indicated to be allowable by the Office if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. *See*, Office Action, p. 6. For this reason, Applicants submit that amended claim 43 is allowable and respectfully request withdrawal of the instant rejection.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-42 were indicated to be allowed. Additionally, claims 44 and 45 were objected to as depending from a rejected base claim. The objection is addressed by amendment of claim 43 to incorporate the limitations of claim 44, which has been cancelled. Claim 45 would no longer depend from a rejected base claim upon entry of the above amendment. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection to claims 44 and 45.

For the foregoing reasons, claims 1-43 and 45 are considered allowable. A Notice to this effect is respectfully requested. If any questions remain, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the number given below.

The Director is hereby authorized to charge any appropriate fees that may be required by this paper, and to credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 23-1925.

Respectfully submitted,

BRINKS HOFER GILSON & LIONE

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